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NO. 206

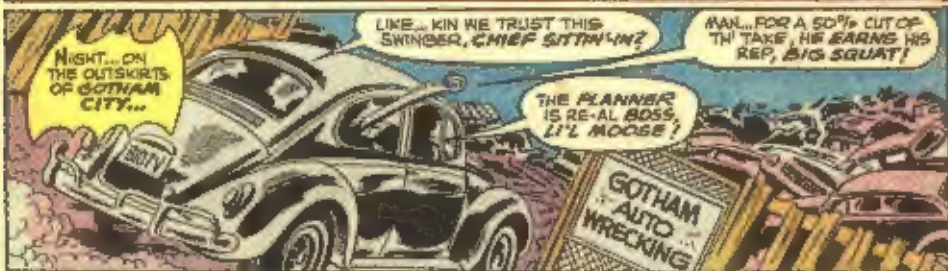
BATMAN

WALKS THE LAST MILE



THIS IS THE...END!

AND THIS...IS THE BEGINNING!



STORY: FRANK ROBBINS ART: DEB NOVICKA & JOE GIELLA

A FAR-OUT SETTING FOR A PERFECT CRIME-
PLOT, OH, BATMANIACS?

BUT... AS WE SAID... THIS IS ONLY THE
BEGINNING OF...

BATMAN WALKS The Last Mile!

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THE NEXT NIGHT...
IN THE MANAGER'S
OFFICE, OF THE
GOTHAM GRAND
HOTEL...

IT HAPPENED DURING LAST
EVENING'S CHARITY BALL,
BATMAN! THE CROOKS
CLEANED OUT THE ENTIRE
PROCEEDS OF THE
ORPHANS' FUND--
WITHOUT LEAVING
A CLUE!

A CLEAN SWEEP,
COMMISSIONER GORDON.
EVIDENTLY PLANNED BY
A MASTER CRIMINAL,
BUT THEY ALL SLIP
UP-- SOMEWHERE!

MAYBE NOT THIS TIME,
BATMAN! REAL SLICK...
PROFESSIONAL! MUST'VE
USED GLOVES... NO
FINGERPRINTS...

...AND NO FOOT-
PRINTS, ROBIN!
COULD'VE WORN
STOCKINGS--OR--
WAIT A MINUTE!

WHAT
IS IT?

TINY, SLICKENING
PARTICLES... SPORED
INTO THE ASPHALT
TILE FLOOR! LIKE
BY THE WEIGHT OF
A HEAVY MAN!

COULD
THIS BE
THE BREAK
WE NEED,
BATMAN?
WHAT ARE
THOSE...

I CAN'T TELL,
COMMISSIONER...
THE I ANALYZE...

ROBIN!
DON'T
MOVE!

A LONG BLACK
HAIR! APPEARS TO BE
STICKY!... AS IF
HEAVILY GREASED!
EXPLAINS WHY IT
STUCK TO YOUR BOOT
WHILE WALKING
AROUND, ROBIN...

A
LARGE
HEAVY
WOMAN...
WITH GREASY
HAIR--OUR
CULPRIT,
BATMAN?

FIRST AXIOM OF
BLEUTHING, ROBIN
BOY... NEVER JUMP
TO CONCLUSIONS!
COME... WE'LL CHECK
THESE OUT IN OUR
BATMOBILE
PORTABLE
CRIME-LAB!

MOMENTS LATER... OUTSIDE...

FORGET THE "CHRONIZ LA Femme"
ROBIN! THE ELECTRON-MICROSCOPE
REVEALS... THIS HAIR WAS ORIGINALLY
BLONDE -- DYED BLACK!

AND SINCE "GENTLEMEN
PREFER BLONDES"...
HARDLY WORTH THE
SWITCH FOR A
WOMAN!

SECOND,
IT'S A 100TH-INCH
THICKER THAN
A SPECIMEN
FEMALE HAIR... WHICH HAS A
SPLIT END, INDICATING FRE-
QUENT BRUSHING AND
GROOMING!

OUR SUSPECT IS A MAN.
WITH A REAL MESSY
MOP! USES GREASE
TO KEEP IT DOWN...
SOMEWHAT LIKE AN
INDIAN USES
DEER-GREASE!

YOU
MEAN...?

SPECTRUM-
ANALYSIS INDICATES
THE GUSTING PARTICLES TO
BE PINACULUS COLONY... OR
SIMPLY--ROBIN! COMMONLY
USED BY DANCERS... OR...
MUSICIANS!

CAN WE
NARROW
IT DOWN?



THOSE TINY
LINT-LIKE FRAGMENTS
CLINGING TO THE STICKY
ROBIN... ALMOST LIKE
SOFT ANIMAL SKIN--
LEATHER!

WHICH RULES OUT
DANCERS! BALLETISTS
WEAR SATIN BOX-
TOES... OTHERS
METAL TAPS...
HARD LEATHER...

...THIS IS MORE
LIKE SOFT
DEER-SKIN...
AS USED IN
INDIAN
MOCCASINS!

INDIAN... ON THE WARPATH IN
GOTHAM CITY? YOU'VE GOT TO
BE KIDDING...



OR A MUSICIAN... HEARING INDIAN
MOCCASINS! BOUND TO PICK UP
SOME ON HIS SOLES WHERE HE'S
WORKING! COMMISSIONER...
THERE WAS A BAND AT THIS
BALL...?

WHY--YES! A COMBO-TRO
CALLED "CUSTER'S LAST
STAND"! THEY TOG UP AS...
INDIANS!

THAT'S OUR
MAN... A HIPPIE
MUSICIAN!
PROBABLY A BASS
PLAYER! WHERE DO
THEY HANG
OUT
REGULARLY?

AT "THE DOOR--
WHY"! BUT...
ACCORDING TO
WITNESSES...
NONE OF THEM
LEFT THE
STAND
DURING
THE TIME
OF THE
ROBBERY!

SHORTLY--
AT THE
DISCOTHEQUE

LOOK... BIG SQUAT!
BATMAN... AND...
UGH... ROBIN!

DOUBLE LIGHT! HE NO
LIKE JM, CHIEF SITIN'-IN...
GOTTA TUNE OUT TH'
SCENE!

COVER ME,
I'L MOOSE!

TAKE
'EM ON THE
LEFT, ROBIN!
I'LL GRAB THE
BASS-BULLY!

AS BIG
SQUAT MAKES
HIS BREAK,
I'L MOOSE
TURNS UP HIS
ELECTRIC-GUITAR
AMPLIFIER,
FULL VOLUME
AND STRIKES A
MIGHTY CHORD.

SOREEE
TWANG

THE AWESOME AMPLIFIED CLAYOR... ABOVE THE THRESHOLD OF PAIN... BRINGS THE DYNAMIC DUO TO A QUIVERING HAT!...



GRABBING THE ATTACHED AMPLIFIER CABLE... ROBIN RETALIATES!



TEARING OFF THE SHATTERED TIGHTEN, THE CAPED CRUSADER DRUMS OUT BIG SQUAT... TRYING TO BEAT A HASTY RETREAT...

TRY THIS TUNE ON YOUR BULL-FIDDLE... BASS-BUM!



CRASHING INTO HIS INSTRUMENT IN A THUNDEROUS JANGLE OF PLUCKED BASS, BIG SQUAT LIES HELPLESS IN A BOWER OF STOLEN LOOT...

HAVE NO RESERVATIONS ABOUT YOUR SITTING OUT THIS WAG-DANCE... CHIEF BITTEN IN!

AND WHEN THE
POLICE
COMMISSIONER
APPEARS
ON THE
SCENE...

THE ORPHANS' CHARITY-RUND MONEY!
THEN THIS COMBO POSING AS HIPPIES,
DID PULL THE JOB! BUT HOW...?
DURING THE BALL, THEY NEVER
LEFT THE BANDSTAND...

THEY DIDN'T!
AT LEAST... NOT
TO THE EYES
OF THE UN-
CONCERNED
DANCERS!
LOOK!

AS
ROBIN
STARTS TO
INFLATE THE
MYSTERIOUS
SHAPE...

USING
THIS...
CONCEALED IN
HIS BULL-FIDDLE...
BIG SQUAT BLEW IT
UP DURING A DANCE
BREAK... AND THEN AT THE
NEXT NUMBER--

... HE
SNEAKED AWAY TO
ROB THE
BALLROOM SAFE!
AND RETURNED...
WITH NO ONE THE
WISER!

NOW WATCH AS I
PROP THAT FIDDLE
UP AGAINST THE WALL
AND SWITCH ON
THE PSYCHEDELIC
STROBE-LIGHTS...

A...
PLASTIC
DOUBLE
OF **BIG
SQUAT**!

PRECISELY!
AND UNDER THIS
BEWILDERING
DISPLAY OF
KALLUCGENIC
LIGHTING...
WHO COULD
DETECT THE
DIFFERENCE?

BUT... WHO
FILLED IN FOR...
HIS BASS-
PLAYING?
THE OTHER
TWO WERE
BUSY...

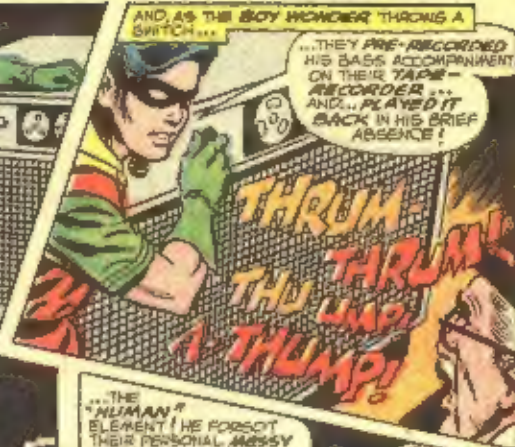
WHO?... IT'S PERFECTLY OBVIOUS, COMMISSIONER! THIS WAS AN ELECTRONICALLY-AMPLIFIED COMBO...



PRETTY BRILLIANT SCHEME... TOO BRILLIANT FOR THIS 'TRIO TO HAVE PLANNED' WHICH MEANS THE 'MASTER-BRAIN' BEHIND THIS OVERLOOKED ONE SMALL DETAIL!



AND... AS THE BOY WONDER THROWS A SWITCH...



...THEY PRE-RECORDED HIS BASS ACCOMPANIMENT ON THEIR TAPE RECORDER... AND... PLAYED IT BACK IN HIS BRIEF ABSENCE!

THRUM-THRUM! THUUMP! A THUMP!

...THE 'HUMAN' ELEMENT! HE FORGOT THEIR PERSONAL MESSY HABITS! GUESS THIS IS 'CLUSTER'S LAST STAND'S'... LAST STAND!



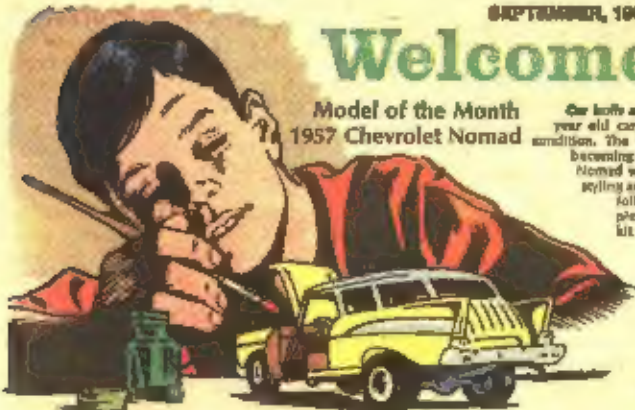
BUT IS IT THE PLANNER IS LIKELY TO TAKE THIS DEFEAT... REAL PERSONAL!

AFTER A REFRESHING PAUSE, THE STORY CONTINUES ON 208 PAGE FOLLOWING!

SEPTEMBER, 1968

Welcome Wagon

Model of the Month
1957 Chevrolet Nomad



Our kids across the nation are searching for this eleven year old car. They rejoice when they find one in good condition. The '57 Nomad station wagon is on its way to becoming a classic, and demand far exceeds the supply. Nomad was the first station wagon with passenger car styling and features. It set new standards that are being followed today... and it's still considered a cool piece of machinery. Revell's new Nomad model kit has doors, windows and tailgate that open and close. Wheels roll and front wheels turn. Front and rear can be adjusted to three different heights... just like they modify the real Nomad. Fun to build, for less than \$2.00.

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Letters to the BATCAVE



Dear Editor: Upon looking at the cover of *Batman* 202, I immediately thought that this was going to be another run-fire scheme for some cunning felon to put away our coward hero for good! (As if they all don't try!) Of course, I had the whole thing wrong but that's my lowly skull for you.

The cover-illustrated story, "Gateway to Death," was just fair. I say this because of a loophole that murred it. I just can't grasp the idea that Alfred would suffer a mental breakdown just because he was going to tell the mysterious robber's name to Batman. Sure, the *Psychic Plunderer* saved his life, but — like the butler said — it was for his own good and he would probably be helped. Yes, it was a tough decision to make and there was probably a lot of internal turmoil, but to be confined to bed for that reason... Nah!

The author of this yarn was John Broome because of the human interest angle (strangely overdone) and the lack of puns.

Next we move to the Robin solo, "Menace of the Motorcycle Marauders" was also just fair. For one thing, there was too much action and not enough plot. As a matter of fact, the closest thing to plot I found was wondering if Dick would make it back to school in time for his speech.

You know something? Figuring out authors of stories really isn't much fun now. The fun should soon be dying out because it's getting too easy. The author of this one was Gardner Fox because he did the other Robin solos and because of the array of puns that were spouted by Robin. (Now I bet both my writer deductions are wrong!) — Joe Rozak, Montville, N.J.

(You hit the Daily Double — wrong on both accounts! Gardner Fox did the cover story; Mike Friedrich the Robin yarn! As you believed, the author-guessing fun has run its course; from now on we're giving author (and artist!) credit along with each story. — Ed)

Dear Editor: Congratul *Batman* 202 was a really solid issue. Solid? Yep, solid is the best way to describe a mag that balances the scale of good art and story.

Concentrating on the story-content, both were well-written and thoroughly enjoyable. "Gateway to Death" contained some of the elements we mystery fans have been clamoring for, and the tie-in with Alfred proves once again what a vital and integral part he plays in the lives of Batman and Robin.

"Menace of the Motorcycle Marauders" was also good, and this is surprising to me, for solo Robin adventures usually turned me off (for the simple reason that they were obviously meant for the younger readers.) However, the idea which made the story was the insight (at last!) into the personal life of Dick Grayson, whom ye editor is forgetting is a teenager like the rest of us. His ending

was symbolic of a new image for Dick that I'd like to see — a small sense of sorrow that his crime-fighting is cutting into his social life. — Dennis Palumbo, Pittsburgh, Pa.

(The wind-up of the Robin tale wound up quite a few readers — so let's unveil a couple more reactions. — Ed.)

* * * * *

Dear Editor: Well, there was a lot of hiff-pow-rock to *Batman* 202, but except for two panels in the second story, it could very easily be read and completely forgotten by even the most enthusiastic of *Batman* fans.

Those two panels... the last panels of Mike Friedrich's Robin story (which, if it doesn't live in history for these panels, will doubtless be famous simply because it was the first story Mike ever sold to the comics). This small scene is surely the most tragic ever written about boy crime-fighters. As a young kid full of desire for revenge and excitement, Robin got trapped into the same self-sacrificing life that Batman chose deliberately, knowing exactly what is entailed. Now, he is faced with the need for sacrifice — a sacrifice to Batman's awesomely austere dedication. He'll follow his leader to the death, of course, but has Batman the right to ask so much of him? — Bruce Vartanoff, Lake Forest, Ill.

Dear Editor: What disturbed me most about the Robin story was the ending. Here was a fellow who had taken the most exquisite pains ever devised by misanthropic minds (hey, these camp stodes must be affecting my mind) crying like a baby over losing a school election. I realize that you wanted us to see how disappointed Dick was, but I never thought that you would dare insult the male sex in such objectionable manner. Fox Shame! — Lee Salem, Brooklyn, N.Y.

* * * * *

Dear Editor: You turned out a real winner in *Batman* 202. Both stories, as well as the cover, were masterpieces. It seems you are trying to make amends with those tried-and-true fans who stuck with you during the camp era.

Gardner Fox really gave us a headliner of a tale in "Gateway to Death." Ah, this is *Batman* at his best! Fighting crooks with no far-out costumes or powers, but with a few brains and talents within the realm of human capabilities! Using logical (and useful) utility belts gimmicks instead of Bat-springs, Bat-analyzers, and a lot of other Bat-junk. The battle-problem situation is one at which Fox excels, and the fact that B&R got hit to force their mouths open, and didn't trip or run into each other added realism. I'm also glad that it wasn't revealed whether or not Norman actually possessed "mind over matter" powers. Although it was hinted at that he did not, at least B&R didn't go into a long speech about how the villain really committed those robberies. — V.O. Speight, Newcomb, Texas

THE NEXT NIGHT, THE GOTHAM GRAND BALLROOM IS HOST TO A TESTIMONIAL DINNER...

...NO OTHER CITY CAN CLAIM...
INDEED... BOAST OF THE
DISTINCTION OF HAVING AS
ITS CHAMPIONS OF LAW
AND ORDER, THAT
POWERFUL PAIR--

--OF
PHONES!
BOTH
OF THEM!!

GOOTHAM CITY
HONOR THE
DYNAMIC
DUO

AND AS THE DISTINGUISHED ASSEMBLAGE
TURNS IN SHOCKED SURPRISE...

YE-AN...
YOU HEARD ME
RIGHT! A COUPLE
OF... PARASITIC
CREEPS!

GOOTHAM CITY
HONOR THE
DYNAMIC
DUO

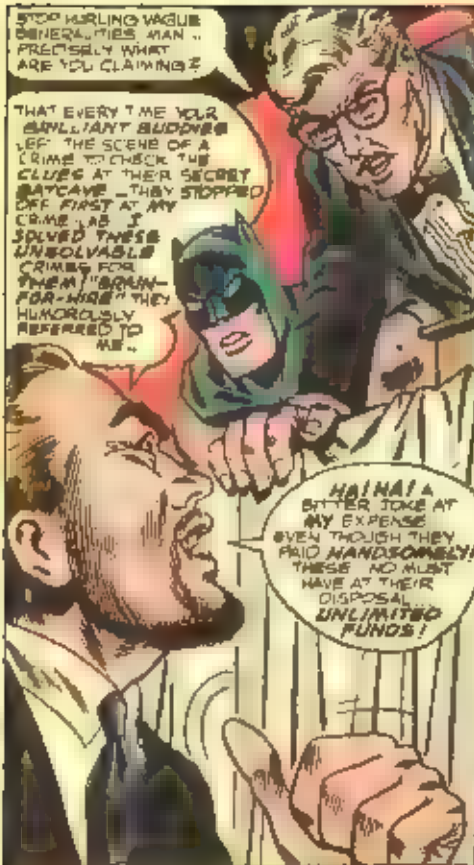
NO
COMMISSIONER!
WE'VE ALL FOUGHT
TO PRESERVE
FREE SPEECH!
HEAR HIM OUT!

GUARDS!
THROW
THAT MAN--

ALRIGHT,
YOU MAY SPEAK!
BUT I WARN YOU...IF
YOU COMMIT PUBLIC
SLANDER OF THESE
UNREWARDED
PUBLIC-MINDED...

UNREWARDED...?!
THESE WITLESS JOKERS
COP ALL THE GLORY...
ACCLAM... WHILE FEEDING
LIKE SHARKS ON
MY BRAINS?!
UNREWARDED...
FAH!

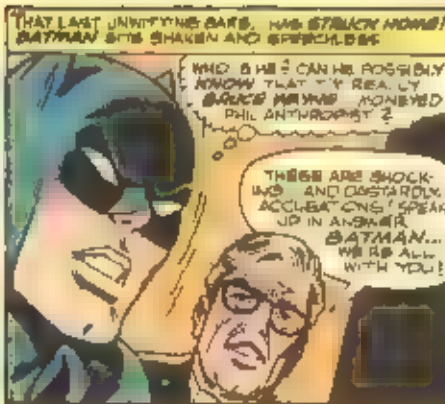
CLICK!



STOP HURLING VAGUE
GENERALITIES MAN...
PRECISELY WHAT
ARE YOU CLAIMING?

THAT EVERY TIME YOUR
BRILLIANT BUDDIES
LEFT THE SCENE OF A
CRIME TO CHECK THE
CLUES AT THEIR SECRET
BATCAVE... THEY STOPPED
OFF FIRST AT MY
CRIME LAB. I
SOLVED THESE
UNSOLVABLE
CRIMES FOR
THEM! "BRAIN-
FOR-HIRE" THEY
HUMOROUSLY
REFERRED TO ME...

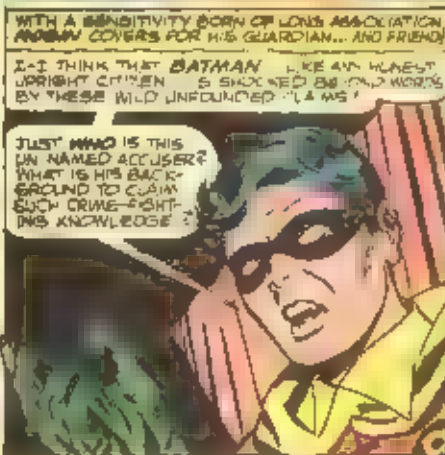
HAHAHA
BITTER JOKE AT
MY EXPENSE
EVEN THOUGH THEY
PAID HANDSOMELY!
THESE NO MIST
HAVE AT THEIR
DISPOSAL
UNLIMITED
FUNDS!



THAT LAST UNWITTING BARK, WAS STRUCK HOME!
BATMAN'S SHAKEN AND SPEECHLESS

WHO ELSE CAN HE POSSIBLY
KNOW THAT I'M REALLY
BRUCE WAYNE? MONEYED
PHIL ANTHROPOLOGY?

THESE ARE SHOCK-
ING AND OUSTARDLY
ACCUSATIONS! SPEAK
UP IN ANSWER
BATMAN...
WE'RE ALL
WITH YOU!



WITH A SENSITIVITY BORN OF LONG ASSOCIATION
ANDREW COVERS FOR HIS GUARDIAN... AND FRIEND!

I-I THINK THAT BATMAN... LIKE AN HONEST
UPRIGHT CITIZEN... IS SHOCKED BY OUR WORDS
BY THESE WILD UNFOUNDED CLAIMS!

JUST WHO IS THIS
UN-NAMED ACCUSER?
WHAT IS HIS BACK-
GROUND TO CLAIM
SUCH CRIME-FIGHT-
ING KNOWLEDGE?



I'M NOT AFRAID TO TELL
EVEN IF YOU ARE! I'M
B.G. HEVER... PRIVATE
INSURANCE CLAIM
INVESTIGATOR! WITH
A LONG HISTORY OF
IN THE FIELD
TRAINING IN
CRIMINOLOGY!

CHECK WITH MY EMPLOYERS.
IF YOU DARE! I'VE FED UP
WITH KEEPING MY BACK-
GROUND IN THE BACK-



EVEN IF TRUE
MR. HEVER
IT DOES NOT
PROVE ANY
SUCH RELATION
TO BATMAN.
AS YOU CLAIM!
JUST WHAT DO
YOU WANT
HERE?

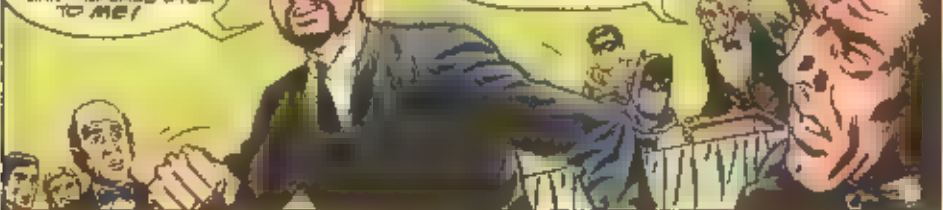
I CHANCE TO
PROVE I AM
THE BRANS
BEHIND
BATMAN!
I JUST
CHALLENGE
HIM TO A
DUEL!

**A DUEL... OF WITS,
COMM-SSIONER!
PUT BATMAN AND
ME ON THE NEXT
BIG CASE. SEE
IF HE CAN PERFORM
WITHOUT USING
MY BRAIN!**



**LET BATMAN HAVE
FIRST CRACK AT
ANY CLUES! IF HE
CAN'T SOLVE EM
TURN THE CASE OVER
TO ME!**

**SOUNDS FAIR ENOUGH,
BATMAN! I CAN TAKE
YOUR SILENCE AS
ACCEPTANCE?**



**MIDNIGHT... AT THE AUTO-GRAVEYARD WHERE
THE PLANNER HOLDS COURT**

**CHOMP AND STOMP--
I'VE SUMMONED YOU TWO
FROM OUT OF TOWN FOR
A VERY SPECIAL JOB!
YOUR METHOD OF OPERATION
IS NOT KNOWN HERE IN
GOTHAM... AND IF YOU
FOLLOW MY PLAN
PRECISELY...**



**I GIVE YOU THE DETAILS
OF THE HEIST... THE
PROCEDURE... AND
WHERE TO MEET ME
TO SPLT THE TAKE!
BUT HEAR THIS--
NO CLUES LEFT
AT THE SCENE!**



AND AFTER THE TRUCK LEAVE

**HOW CAN I LOSE
AGAINST BATMAN.
WHEN I PLAN THE
CRIMES! HE GETS
"SHOT DOWN"
AND I CALL THE
SHOTS!**



THE NEXT NIGHT IN AN AFTER-HOURS CHECK CASHING SERVICE

FIRST THE CANNISTER COMES ROLLING INTO THE OFFICE THEN POW-POW! IT EXPLODES! CHECKING GAS! WE ALL BLACKED OUT

AND WHEN YOU CAME TO ALL THE ASH WAS GONE! MAH NO EYEWITNESS IDENTIFICATION POSSIBLE... NO FINGERPRINTS NO NOTHING!

LOOKS LIKE THE REAL SITUATION TO START THE BATMAN-NEVER DUEL!

AND, IN RESPONSE TO THE HURRY-CALL...

IT'S ALL YOURS BAT-BRAIN... CLEAN IT UP FAST I'M... HAVING A LOOSIN' SLEEP

YOU COULD'VE SAVED YOURSELF IF THE TRIP NEVER HAD YOU BEDDY EYE BEFORE YOUR NEXT YAWN

A PREDICTION THAT WOULD PUT AN INSOMNIAC TO SLEEP AS THE DYNAMIC DUO SLOWLY LOSSES TO COOL

NOT A CLUE! WE'RE BEAT IF WE NEVER CAN SOLVE THIS!

THE FLOOR IS YOURS BIG BRAIN.

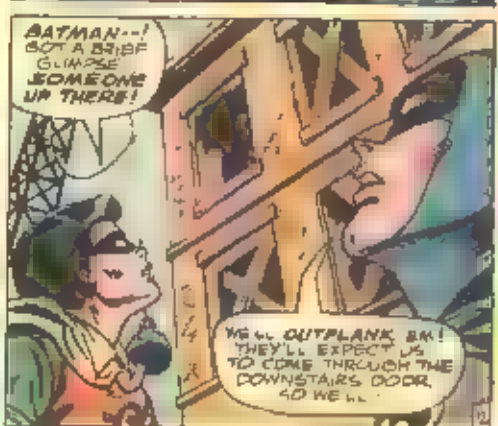
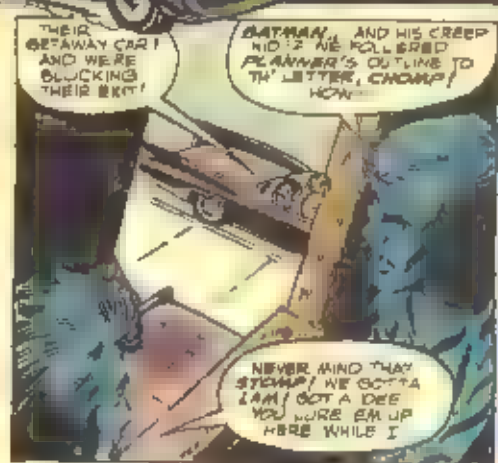
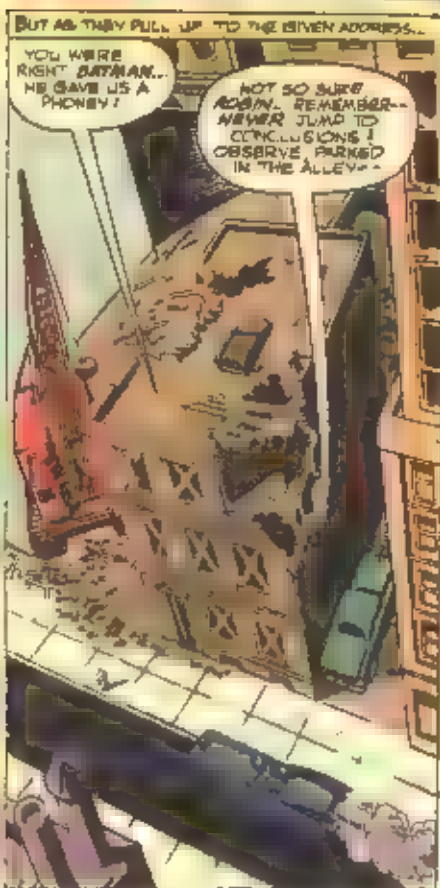
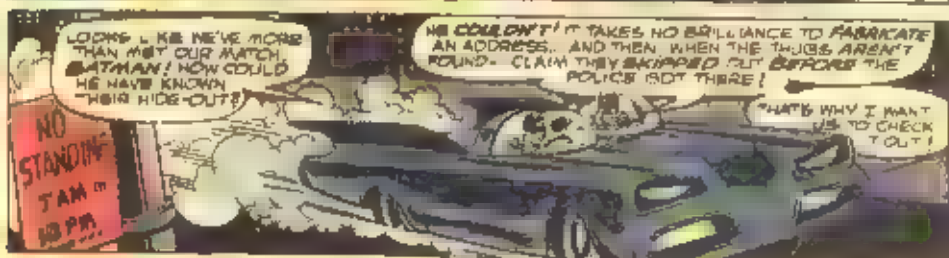
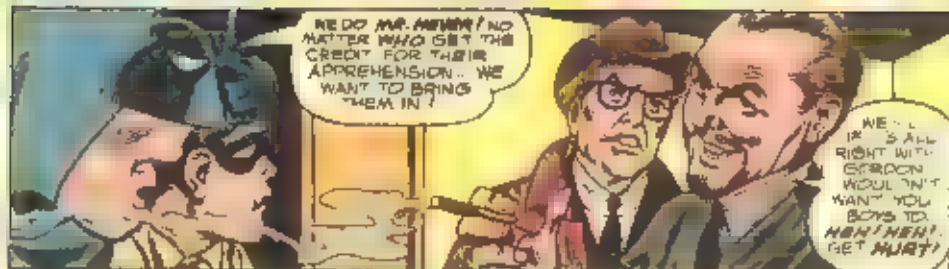
DON'T... I MEAN I NEED IT SMART BLENDS! SAY ALL I NEED... WHILE YOU TWO WERE KNOCKIN' YOUR BRAINS OUT!

FIRST... HE "TECHNIQUE" USED IS OBVIOUSLY THAT OF CHOMP'IN' STOMP... TWO GAS "COVER" SPECIALISTS!

SECOND I CAN TELL YOU WHERE THEY'RE HOLDING UP--

YOU CAN'T WHAT GAVE YOU THE CLUE?

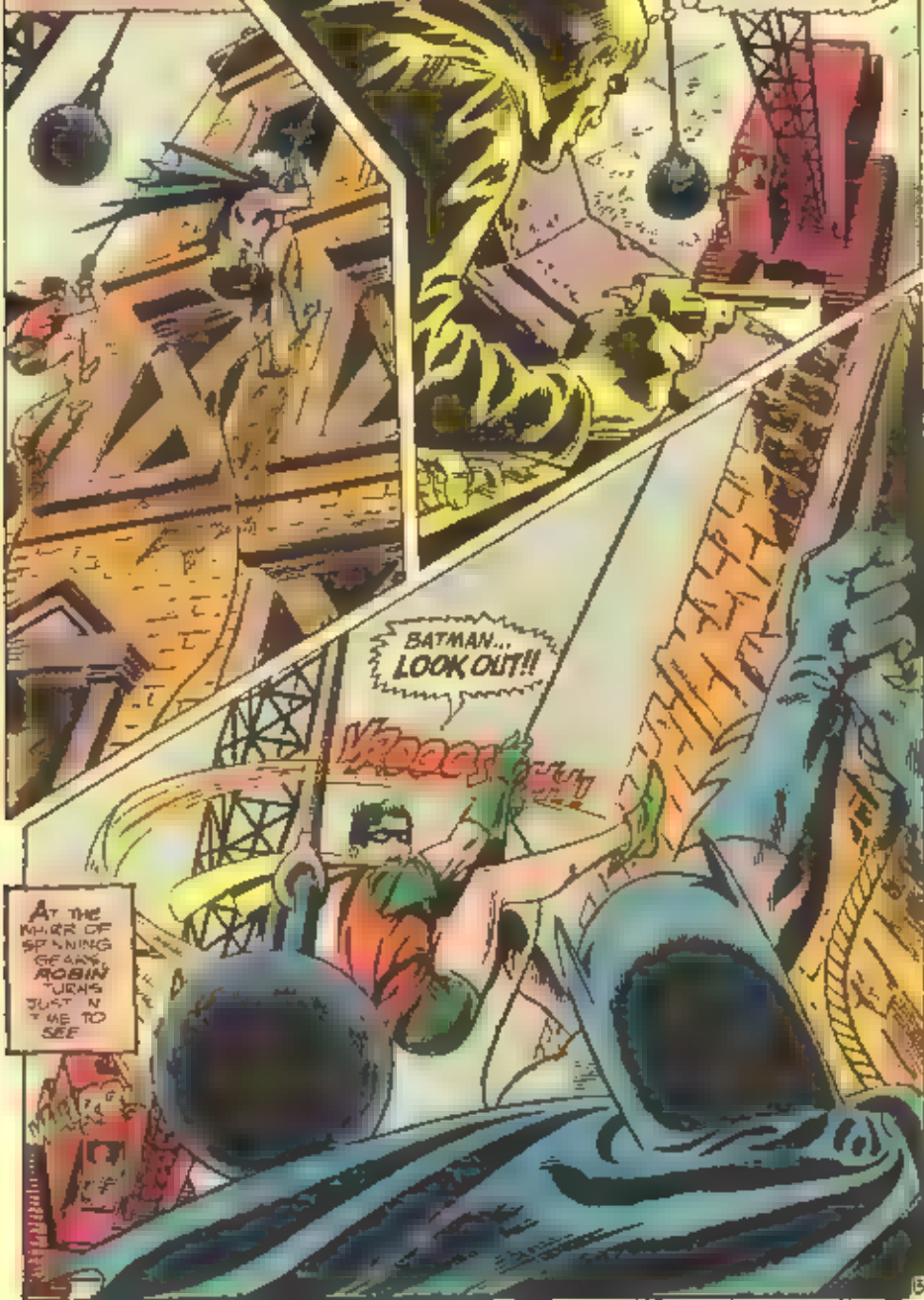
CHOMP, COMMERCE SECRETS... HE THAT... SOME HIGLER MAN YOU AN AFFORD TO PAY! NOW, DO YOU WANT HE ADDRESS?



MISSING BATMAN
ROPE ONTO THE
ROOF EDGE HIS
DYNAMIC DUO
WALKS THE HOUSE-FRONT

WHILE INSIDE LOOKING DOWN TO THE SIDE

ARE WE EVER GONNA
HAVE A BALL WITH THESE
CLIMBING CREEPERS!
THEN WE KIN LIGHT OUT
FREE AN CLEAR!



BATMAN...
LOOK OUT!!

WROOOOOW!!

AT THE
MOMENT OF
SPINNING
GEARS,
ROBIN
TURNS
JUST IN
TIME TO
SEE

AND AS THE WICKED WRECKING BALL
MAKES ITS RETURN ARC

ONE
GOOD
SWING...

KAR-U-UNCH!

YOMP!

TZZONG!

DESERVES ANOTHER!
THIS SHOULD TAKE THE
TEE'N OUT OF YOUR
BITE, SHARKFACE!

THAT TAKES CARE OF ENOUGH BUT WHAT OF
THE HELPLESS DANCE-ME CARPET CREATOR—
WITH THE AZARNE' STOMP ABOVE HIM?

BATMAN IS REALLY
KNOCKING UP
IN A
BIND...
WITH NO
AID IN
SIGHT!...

BUT
ANOTHER
SWINGER
MAKES A
RETURN TRIP...
EXTRACTING WILDLY...

WHAM!

CARE FOR A
RAINCHECK?
YOU'RE OUT
OF THE
BALLGAME!

Y'VE ON THE LOSING END THIS
TIME, BATMAN! EYE-EYE...
SWINGER!

LATER,
AT POLICE
HEADQUARTERS

THEN, GUS NEVER
CALLED THE SCORE
RIGHT, BATMAN?

AFRAID SO
COMMISSIONER
HE'S WON THE
FIRST ROUND!

BUT THERE'S STILL A
SECOND ROUND
COMING UP! WE'LL BE
WAITING!

NOW I'VE GOT
BATMAN
HOOKED!
ON THE NEXT
CASE WE'LL
BITE AT ANY
CLUE!

LATER THAT NIGHT THE PLANNER--ALIAS E.G. NEVER--SET'S UP THE SECOND ROUND "FOX" FOR THE EMERGED CRIME-FIGHTERS!

YOUR COLLECTIVE CATA-CROOK THE LANGSTON DIAMONDS! I'VE GIVEN YOU A DETAILED GROUND PLAN OF THE MANSION-- AND THE TAKING!

NOW AS A GUARANTEED CLEAR BETRAYAL, I WANT YOU TO PLANT THIS FALSE CLUE!

LOOKS LIKE A... TV ALIGNMENT TOOL! WHAT'S THE GIG PLANNER?

JUST A MIST! MEN! PRIVATE JOKE! FOR A JOKER WHO'S GROWN TOO BIG FOR HIS STRETCHIES!

WHAT IS... IS EVIL HAS THE MASTER OF MACHINATION COME UP WITH NOW? WE SHALL SEE... AFTER AN EXHAUSTING 2-PAGE BREAK!

DC COMICS

BROTHER OVER THE

THE

GEEK

12c

WELCOME TO THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA! EXCITING! ADVENTURE FROM THE DEEP!

WILLY NUTS FIGHTS THE SCULPTURE

A MAGAZINE ABOUT TODAY!

MAKE THE SCENE WITH

THE GEEK

HE'S COMING YOUR WAY!!

ON SALE SEPT. 5TH

LETTERS TO THE BATCAVE--EXTRA

Dear Editor:

Holy girl problems, golly gee! Why may I ask you, doesn't the Boy Wonder have a chick? The poor guy has live such a boring life with dead old Aunt Harriet and trust-worthy Alfred the butler and, of course, Bruce Wayne himself—obviously (this is when he isn't in his Robin get-up and isn't fighting crime). Gee, gosh, if I had to lead a life like that I'd go off my nut. So have a heart and give master Richard Grayson a love and other fans would like it very much to see the Boy Wonder kiss a girl and not back off and show ember fascination. Let him enjoy it to the old ways, at least you would give him an occasional girl friend but not any more! What's the matter are you too tight with your girls or does Bat-guy get 'em all?

—Rick Marsh, Denver, Colo.

(And yet other readers have willingly told us that stories depicting young Robin with a chick would lay an egg!—Editor)

Dear Editor:

Although your Batman stories are good, I think you show the Caped Crusader as being too unbeatable. In my opinion, Batman should have a limit to his powers. Give Batman and Robin real mysteries to solve and let Peter's sack, without any of those intolerable utility belt gadgets. Have Batman battle a foe that would be a match—or more than match—for him, both physically and mentally.

No, I'm not through yet. I recommend that you have a Batman story continued in a follow-up issue. Robin should be "in" in more of the adventures—and should also have a girl friend. I hope you will consider doing some of the things I have recommended.

—Ida Taylor, Salisbury, N.C.

(As operators how about the two-parters—a Batman first, we dealt you in issues 304-306?—Editor)

Dear Editor:

I've been a Batman fan for twenty years. After two decades, I have a complaint and an urgent plan.

Please, PLEASE, give Batman back his old looks. He used to look like Robert Goulet; now he looks too much like Superman. I liked Batman's eyes and chin so much that I married a man with the very same eyes and chin.

So I beg of you—plead with you. Give Batman back his Robert Goulet eyes and chin.

Donna R.M., Waterloo, Iowa.

(And if we gave Batman Robert Goulet's eyes and chin where would that leave Mr. Goulet—to say nothing of Carol Lawrence?—Editor)

Dear Editor:

In the "New Look" Batman you have presented us with several types of stories: excellent, good, bad, and pass-me-the-aspirin-please. The last category is composed of "camp" stories, so I won't dwell on them with the hopeful expectation that "camp" is now out. The "uncamp" stories are the basis for this contribution to your worthwhile EXTRA department.

Excellent stories with human villains, human plot, human situations. Let's have more villain, not villains, but crooks. Ordinarily I expect to see wild, wacky, just barely believable, super-powered villains. In Batman it's different. Maybe I've been spoiled, but I feel that there must be more of the likes of Doc Hastings, Ira Radon, Johnny Wiles, Matt Whelan, even the unknown criminal in "Batman's Baffling Turnabout." The only thing wrong with these crooks is that they are one-time villains, with the exception of Johnny Wiles. The only two consumed villains, placed in this category are Two-Face and the Joker. The former because he seems to be the only man who can really "strike fear into Batman" (take that Scarecrow—and that—and THAT), the Joker because of the intense hatred each has for the other. The Hooded Hangman was also good, but only merited one appearance.

Good Riddler, Penguin, Catwoman, etc., etc. ETC—I think I've made my point. They're all too unbelievable. (I'll not accept the fact that half the people of Gotham City are raving lunatics, which these must be). However, look into their private lives and origins with a little more depth, and they could just climb up a notch or two.

Bad: Scarecrow is the only "uncamp" villain here. His "fear chemicals" are utterly unbelievable, and they only accomplish what Two-Face, Joker, and Blockbuster do without any type of science-fiction gadgets.

Blockbuster! How could I have left out one of the most interesting characters in comics? The only thing I dislike about him is the way he always seems to be back to "normal" at the end of each of his adventures. I hope you bring him back soon—and this time get him involved with Two-Face. They're made for each other! The time I hope the Titanic Throwback is given a full-length novel to develop and display not only hate, but also other primary emotions, such as fear of life, blind obedience to people he believes to be his friends, wolfing down his food, etc. At the end of his next adventure, have him still undecided as to whether Batman is his friend, whether he wants to try and adapt to his life or to try and destroy those who are only trying to help.

I started off this letter about stories and wind up talking about villains. This means I think that a story is good only if the hero and villain are both good.

—V.O. Spengler, Minnervich, Tex.

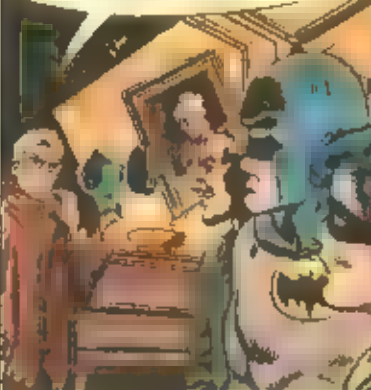
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ACCORDING TO COMMISSIONER GORDON'S CALL, BATMAN SOUNDS LIKE ANOTHER CAT-CROOK CAPER!

RED ROBIN IS MOST TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE! ESPECIALLY SINCE WE GET FIRST CRACK AT TRACKING HIM DOWN

IT'S ALL YOURS, GENTLEMEN! LOOKS LIKE A CLEAN PRO. CAPER! WITH A HALF-MILLION IN DIAMONDS NEATLY LIFTED!



DETERMINED NOT TO BE OUTCLASSSED BY THE SAVILE MASTER OF MAYHEM, THE DYNAMIC DUO OF DETECTION RE-PROBLY STARTS ITS HUNT.



TAKE YOUR TIME I DID ALL MY SLEEPING THIS AFTERNOON I DO A REAL CAREFUL JOB YOU CAN'T AFFORD ANOTHER GOOD!

AFTER AN EXHAUSTING SEARCH FOR CLUES, SUDDENLY...



BATMAN.. LOOK HERE..!



HMM! A TV ALIGNMENT TOOL! MUST'VE ROLLED UNDER THAT CLOCK BASE



I WAS RIGHT! KNEW THAT "CAT-CLOCK THEORY" WAS TOO ART TOO SIMPLE! CATCH ROBIN... WE'VE GOT A STRONG LEAD THIS TIME!

YEAH! HOOKED. AND PRACTICALLY LANDED!

WHY YES, SIR. HE CAME THIS AFTERNOON TO REPAIR THE TV. I SAID HE'D RECEIVED A CALL THE MADAM WAS 'UT SO I GUESSED SHE'D CALLED!

YOU SUGGEST? THEN YOU CAN'T BE SURE THAT SOMEONE PHONED FROM HERE!

AN OLD DEVICE TO ENTER AND... **CASE THE JOINT!** BUT AT LEAST HE LEFT HIS... **CALLING CARD!**

ON THE NEXT SPARES...
CALL
A.M. TENNA
43 ARBOR DRIVE

OH HE IS SHE? AND I SUPPOSE YOU FOUND THE EVIDENCE ON HIM?

HERE'S YOUR MAN COMMISSIONER!

SHIRTY AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS

A QUICK DRIVE LATER

S-BATMAN!
OH-H. IN WHAT MISTAKE DO I MAKE? YOU'VE CAUGHT ME! I'M **S-SHIRTY!**

THAT OLD INSTINCT NEVER LEAVES ME OF ROBIN! WE'VE GOT HIM DEAD & RIGHT!

S-BATMAN!
HE'S TAKING THE STOLEN JEWELS OUT OF HIS DRAWER!

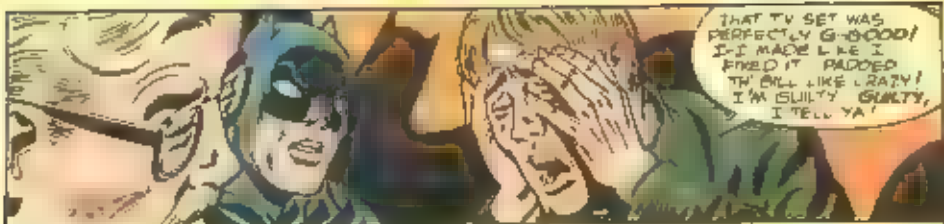
GOOD GRIEF, ROBIN!
IN OUR HASTE WE FORGOT THAT ONE ESSENTIAL DETAIL

AND... **MUCH MORE!** ACTING IN THE BRIEF AND DETECTION OF MR. NEVER WE'VE ALREADY APPREHENDED THE REAL CRIMINAL!

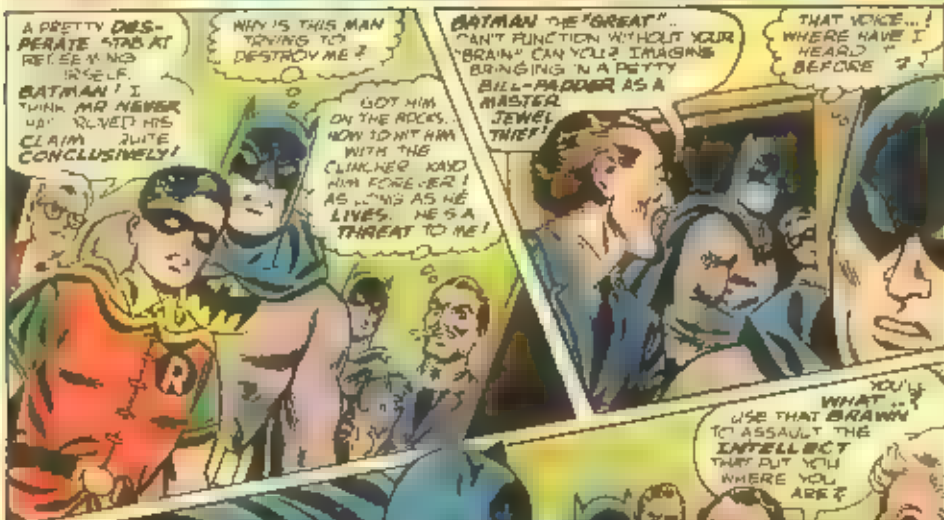
SEND THE CUPP... IN

IN THE CAT-CROCK?

MR. TENNA... JUST WHAT "CRIME" DID YOU COMMIT?



THAT TV SET WAS PERFECTLY GOOD! I-I MADE LIKE I FIRED IT PADDED TH' BALL LIKE CRAZY! I'M GUILTY GUILTY, I TELL YA!



A PRETTY DESPERATE STAB AT RELEASING HIMSELF.

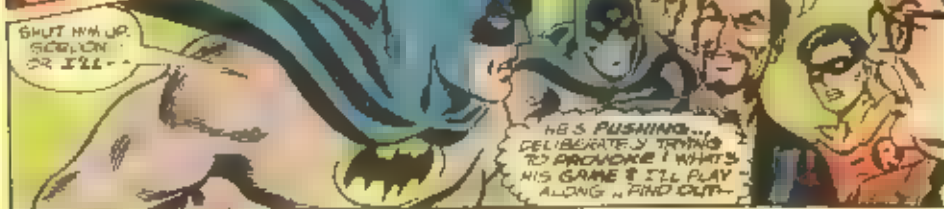
BATMAN! I THINK MR NEVER UP! RAVED HIS CLAIM QUITE CONCLUSIVELY!

WHY IS THIS MAN TRYING TO DESTROY ME?

GOT HIM ON THE ROCKS... NOW I GOT HIM WITH THE CLINKER KAYD HIM FOREVER! AS LONG AS HE LIVES... HE'S A THREAT TO ME!

BATMAN THE "GREAT" CAN'T FUNCTION WITHOUT YOUR "BRAIN" CAN YOUR IMAGINE BRINGING IN A PETTY BILL-PADDER AS A MASTER JEWEL THIEF!

THAT VOICE... WHERE HAVE I HEARD BEFORE?



SHUT HIM UP, GORDON... OR I'LL--

WHAT... USE THAT BRAIN TO ASSAULT THE INTELLECT THAT PUT YOU WHERE YOU ARE?

HE'S PUSHING... DELIBERATELY TRYING TO PROVOKE! WHAT'S HIS GAME? I'LL PLAY ALONG... FIND OUT--



BATMAN AIMS HIS PUNCH TO MISS!

YOU LYING... CONNIVING... SWINDLER!

SEE, COMMISSIONER HE ATTACKED ME! I DEMAND POLICE PROTECTION... AGAINST THIS LUNATIC!

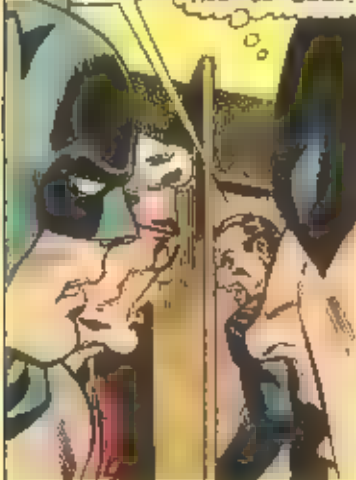
COOL IT MR NEVER! BATMAN MAY'VE BLOWN HIS STACK... BUT HE'S NO KILLER!

MR NEVER? NOW I KNOW THAT VOICE... HE'S THE PLANNER!!

3-BATMAN--NO!

BATMAN IS A FRAUD... AND WHO KNOWS WHAT ELSE? IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO ME, GORDON...

SO THAT'S THE FINK WHO TURNED ME IN! WHO ELSE KNEW I PULLED THE LANGSTON CAPER? HE'S GONNA PAY FOR THIS... BUT GOOD!

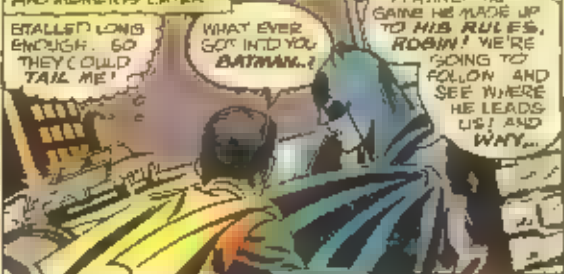


AND MOMENTS LATER

STALLED LONG ENOUGH. SO THEY COULD TAIL ME!

WHAT EVER GOT INTO YOU BATMAN?!

PLAYING THE GAME HE MADE UP TO HIS RULES, ROBIN! WE'RE GOING TO FOLLOW AND SEE WHERE HE LEADS US!... AND WHY...



WHILE INSIDE, A MAN BENT ON VENGEANCE ELBOWS HIS GUARD, AND



HE FINDS A MEANS OF ESCAPE. READY AND WAITING!

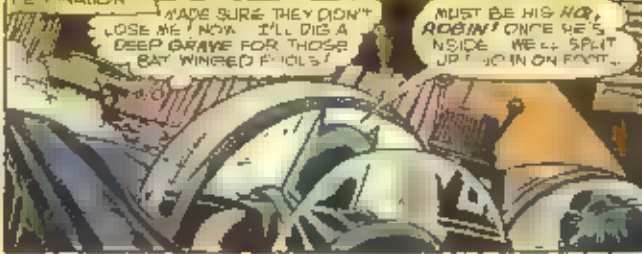
PLANNER WILL BE HEAVEN FOR HIS AUTO GRAVE YARD. I'LL BURY HIM THERE! WITH MY BARE HANDS!



SHORTLY AS THE PLANNER--ALIAS E.G. NEVER--REACHES HIS DESTINATION

MADE SURE THEY DIDN'T LOSE ME! NOW I'LL DIG A DEEP GRAVE FOR THOSE BAT WINGED FIDOLS!

MUST BE HIS HQ, ROBIN! ONCE HE'S INSIDE WE'LL SPLIT UP TO JOIN ON FOOT...

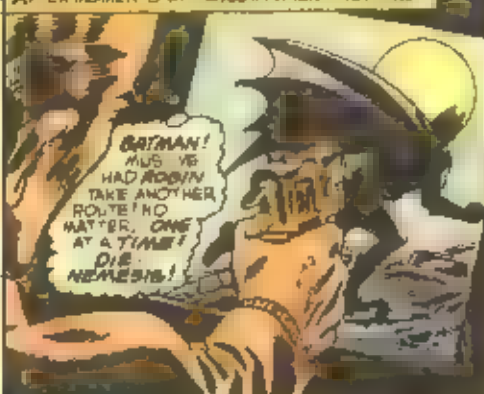


I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO SEE IT--

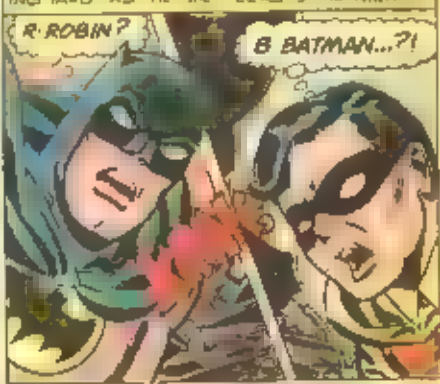
YES, COMMISSIONER GORDON. I'LL KILL HIM IN SELF DEFENSE! I'LL SAY BATMAN TO REATEY, NO EARLIER!



AFTER MOMENTS OF 'TENSE...PATIENT' WAITING

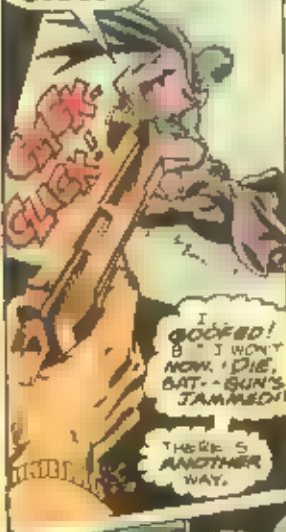


AND IN TWO DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE WRECK
YARD AS THE SKY TELLS THE NIGHT



AS THE CAPED CRUSADER
REACHES THE CRASH SITE
FIRST

HE
CAT-CROAK...?!
JAWNE
BUNKE DOWN
A COLD
BLOOD!



SOMEONE LEFT THE
ELECTROMAGNETIC
CURRENT ON! ALL I
HAVE TO DO IS
SWITCH IT OFF
AND



BUT EVEN AS THE DEADLY
CAR CORPSE HUNG ES DOWN
FROM IT OF NOWHERE!



HIS WIND KNOCKED OUT, ROBIN LIES MOMENTARILY STUNNED... AS BATMAN FALLS INTO THE CAR-CRUSHER PIT AFTER STRIKING HIS HEAD AGAINST THE EDGE!...



AND AS THE PLUNGER THROWS THE REMOTE CONTROL LEVER

SEIZING A MASSIVE CONSTRUCTION BEAM, THE DESPERATE BOY WONDER WEDGES IT INTO THE NARROWING GAP, BUT...

IT... BENT UP LIKE A GIANT PRETZEL! ONLY ONE... FAR-OUT CHANCE LEFT!



A FAR-OUT LONG SHOT THAT SCORES... AS ROBIN KURLS HIS BATARANG!



CONTINUED ON 25 PAGE FOLLOWING

THE WHEELS OF JUSTICE GRIND SLOW... BUT FINE... AS...

...BALLISTIC TESTS PROVE THE FATAL BULLET WAS FIRED FROM THE DEFENDANT'S GUN!

...THAT'S THE CAT ALRIGHT-- THE PLANNER!

...HE SURE "PLANNED" IT! OUR... HAI HAI... PERFECT CRIME!

...YEAH, IT WAS HIS VOICE WHAT ORDERED THE T.V. REPAIR AT THE LANGSTON MANSION!

...IT MAY HAVE BEEN MISTAKEN IDENTITY... BUT IT WAS PRE-MEDITATED MURDER!



AND SO THE MASTER OF MALICIOUS MAYHEM FACES A HIGHER "PLANNER"...

...YOU SHALL BE TAKEN FROM THENCE TO A PLACE OF EXECUTION... WHERE 30,000 VOLTS OF ELECTRICITY SHALL BE PASSED THROUGH YOUR BODY...

...TILL YOU ARE DEAD!



LATER... ON DEATH-ROW...

HE'S GONE OFF HIS ROCKER!

FOOLS! IDIOTS! CRETINS! I'M BATMAN'S "BRAIN"... I AM BATMAN!



AS THE FATAL HOUR NEARS, BATMAN IS SUMMONED TO THE WARDEN'S OFFICE...

HE'S CRACKED UP... CLAIMS HE'S YOU! AND HIS LAST REQUEST... TO DIE AS HE "LIVED"... AS BATMAN!

HMM... AN INSANE WHIM? OR... A DIABOLICAL SCHEME TO THWART JUSTICE... AND HAVE US COMMIT HIM TO A MENTAL INSTITUTION...?



BUT HIS SANITY AT THE TIME OF THE CRIME WAS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED AT HIS TRIAL...!



TRUE... GUESS WE'LL NEVER REALLY KNOW! GRANT HIS WISH WARDEN... HE COULDN'T DESTROY ME IN LIFE... HE CAN'T HARM MY IMAGE... IN DEATH!



AND SO THE CONDEMNED MAN'S LAST WISH IS FULFILLED AS HE COMPLETES THAT GRIM "LAST MILE" LEADING TO...

THE END



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